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**HUNTINGTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISTRIBUTION**

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Joshua Burrell, 27, of Huntington, pleaded guilty today in federal court before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers to conspiracy to distribute a quantity of oxycodone. Burrell admitted that on June 29, 2010, he, along with two other associates, sold 20 80-milligram oxycodone pills to an undercover agent working for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in exchange for \$950. The transaction occurred at the Smokin' Aces store that was located in Huntington. Burrell further admitted that on July 14, 2010, he and an associate spoke to an undercover ATF agent by telephone to arrange a drug transaction and subsequently sold 30 80-milligram oxycodone pills to the agent in exchange for \$1,425.

The defendant admitted that on August 3, 2010, he and an associate sold 19 80-milligram oxycodone pills to an undercover ATF agent in exchange for \$855. Following the pill transaction, Burrell and his associate arranged to sell the undercover agent a quarter of a pound of marijuana. Burrell admitted that he and an associate sold 118 grams of marijuana to the agent in exchange for \$500. Also, on August 12, 2010, Burrell and his associates sold 50 80-milligram oxycodone pills to an undercover ATF agent in exchange for \$2,200. All of the August 2010 drug transactions that the defendant participated in occurred at the Smokin' Aces store that was located in Huntington.

Burrell faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine when he is sentenced on October 24, 2011.

Co-defendants Rachele L. Brown, 36 and Kristina Dawn Pauley, 25, both of Huntington, previously pleaded guilty to federal oxycodone charges. Brown faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine when she is sentenced on October 24, 2011. Pauley faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine when she is sentenced on August 15, 2011.

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Assistant United States Attorney William King is in charge of the prosecution.

This case is being prosecuted as part of a yearlong undercover operation that targeted illegal drugs and firearms crimes in the Huntington area. The operation was led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and assisted by the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Huntington Police Department, and various other law enforcement agencies. It was announced to the public in March after a grand jury returned indictments against 55 defendants.

This case was also prosecuted as part of an ongoing effort led by the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia to combat the illicit sale and misuse of prescription drugs. The U.S. Attorney's Office, joined by various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, remain committed to aggressively pursuing and shutting down illegal pill trafficking, eliminating open air drug markets and curtailing the spread of opiate painkillers in communities across the Southern District.

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